

National Dance and Folk Elements in Argentine Cello Compositions

by

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DECLARATION

This exegesis contains the results of research carried out at the University of Tasmania between 2003 and 2006. It contains no material that has been accepted for a degree or diploma by the University or any other institution, except by way of background information that is duly acknowledged in the exegesis. I declare that this exegesis is my own work and to the best of my knowledge and belief contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due acknowledgement is made in the text.

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Penelope Witt', written in a cursive style.

Penelope Witt

ABSTRACT

This research project focuses on the national dance and folk elements of Argentine compositions for cello and piano and for solo cello. Research has been conducted through the study and performance of these works with the aim of developing musical interpretation skills specific to the repertoire and improving general performance expertise. The outcomes of this research are a series of recorded performances and an accompanying exegesis that contextualises these performances.

The scope of the project was limited to 138 musical scores of Argentine cello compositions dating from 1898 to 2005. The research culminated in four major recitals which included performances of works by Argentina's most well-known composers, Alberto Ginastera and Astor Piazzolla. These recitals also included compositions by other established Argentine composers such as Julián Aguirre, Constantino Gaito, Carlos Guastavino, Juan José Castro, Washington Castro, Luís Gianneo and José Bragato, and introduced new works by Alejandro Iglesias Rossi, Juan María Solare, Roberto Segret, Valdo Sciammarella and Roque de Pedro. Recordings of these concerts are appended to the exegesis. The exegesis includes a survey of literature and background information on the musical heritage of Argentina and the history of nationalism in Argentine art music. This background information is followed by the musical analysis of the national dance and folk elements found in the selected Argentine cello repertoire.

A significant proportion of the works analysed show evidence of musical elements from tango and indigenous and Creole folk music from Argentina and the majority of these elements have been incorporated with direct nationalistic intent. Instrumental techniques

assimilated from folk and tango performance are demonstrated in the performances of this repertoire and discussed in the exegesis.

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